

**SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM**

This form and the descriptive information in the application package constitute the contents of Initial Study pursuant to County Guidelines under Ordinance 3040 and Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

I. Project Label:

APPLICANT: E. L. YEAGER CONSTRUCTION
PROPOSAL: MINING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT &
RECLAMATION PLAN FOR A SAND & GRAVEL
PIT ON 37 AC
COMMUNITY: BARSTOW S-1
LOCATION: 15 FWY EAST SIDE; WILDWASH RD, 1 MILE
NORTH OF
DATES: 745DSN02011334SAMR01/11334SM1
FILE/INDX: SAMR/DN213-253/0418-011-78
STAFF: RICH TOUSLEE
REP(S): KIT KJELSTROM

USGS Quad: Turtle Valley, 7.5' Ser.

T,R,Section: T7N, R3W, E1/2, Sec. 9

Thomas Bros: Pg. 3937 (2002 bk)

Planning Area: Victor Valley (VV)

OLUD: Resource Conservation (RC)

Improvement Level: 5

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

1. Project title: Wildwash Sand & Gravel Mine
2. Lead agency name and address: County of San Bernardino, Land Use Services Department, 385 N. Arrowhead Ave., San Bernardino, CA. 92415
3. Contact person and phone number: Rich Touslee (909) 387-4105
4. Project location: I-15 FWY EAST SIDE; WILDWASH RD, 1 MILE NORTH OF
5. Project sponsor's name and address: E. L. Yeager Construction Co. P.O. Box 87, Riverside, CA
1. Description of project: The project proponent, E. L. Yeager Construction Co., has submitted an application for a Mining Conditional Use Permit and Reclamation Plan to continue a sand and gravel mining operation on approximately 37 acres of a 398 acre parcel. This site was originally permitted in 1997 for a 5-year life. The applicant has requested approval for a new 20-year operational life with five additional years to complete reclamation, terminating in the year 2028. The property is owned by Catellus Land Development Company, which has an ongoing lease with Yeager Construction.

The project will continue to provide construction aggregate for planned maintenance and future expansions of the I-15 Freeway, and material for other future road construction projects in the general vicinity that the company may contract for during the 20 year mine life. The mining and reclamation plan incorporates an Interim Reclamation Plan for idle periods. The applicant has indicated that there is an immediate need for construction aggregate to satisfy the company's contract obligations based on the award of a Caltrans road resurfacing contract for the segment of the I-15 Freeway between the Mojave River Bridge in Victorville and Barstow Road which is ongoing at this time.

Yeager Construction Company has been the successful low bidder on several of many upcoming CALTRANS Interstate Freeway Improvement Projects, the first commenced in the summer of 1997. CALTRANS is proposing a series of additional projects between Victorville and Barstow.

The general location of the project site is approximately mid-way between the cities of Victorville and Barstow on the east side of the I-15 Freeway (see attached Vicinity Map). The specific site location is near the Wild Wash Road Interchange with the I-15 Freeway which is about 14 miles north of Victorville and 16 miles south of Barstow. The sand and gravel mine is situated approximately one-half mile north of the interchange and

approximately one-quarter mile east of the freeway (see attached Location Map).

The mine plan calls for an open pit hillside method, which daylights west. It begins at the lower (westerly) quarry limits and progressively excavates easterly into the upsloping hillside. This is no longer a phased mine plan, as originally approved in 1997.

Pit dimensions currently are approximately 1200 ft. in width and 800 ft. in length and encompass approximately 25 acres. The back wall and side walls of the quarry will be left at a 3:1 slope ratio. The quarry floor will be left with a minimum 1% slope gradient toward the west to allow for surface drainage. The east end of the quarry floor would be about 80' below natural grade where it intercepts the sloping back wall. The west end of the quarry would "daylight" at natural grade. At the end of mining in the year 2023, the quarry would be approximately 1470 ft. at its widest dimension and 1260 ft. at its longest dimension with overall average dimensions of approximately 1200 ft. by 1200 ft. The final quarry floor at the east end would be approximately 80 ft. below natural grade where it intercepts the final 3:1 back slope. The west end of the quarry would remain "daylighted" with natural grade.

Mining operations will be performed by normal techniques used in sand and gravel operations. Native material will be ripped and pushed into piles by bulldozer and then loaded directly by wheel loader into a portable crushing and screening rock plant for processing on-site. Stockpiles of different size rock products are maintained in the processing area to provide readily available product. Waste material, consisting of sand, oversize rock and material containing roots and other contaminants will be stockpiled for final disposal during reclamation by distributing it on the quarry floor. Final reclamation will leave the site as natural open space.

The asphalt and rock plants will only be set up and in operation during active road construction work. They will be removed from the site during periods of inactivity. The asphalt plant that will be used is referred to as a drum-dryer/continuous mix plant. The plant consists of the following components: a feeder bin, conveyor, drum dryer, stacker conveyor, storage silo for finished material, "bag house" dust control devices, asphalt oil storage tanks, maintenance and control trailers, a trailer-mounted electric generator fueled by propane or diesel, fuel storage tank, weight scale and scale house.

The mining conditional use permit application specifies that the hours of operation will be Monday through Friday, 6 am to 6 pm. The onsite operation will employ up to 6-8 people during maximum production.

The site has no water wells and past drilling attempts have not been successful. Water consumption for the operation is estimated at up to 12,000 gallons/day based on a 200 day/year work schedule. Daily use is estimated to be $12,000 \times 200 \text{ days} = 2.4 \text{ million gal./yr.}$ divided by $325,000 \text{ gal./AF} = 7.4 \text{ AF}$. The original designated water source in the mine plan was Well No. 07N04W18L02 located in Oro Grande. The annual production allowance pursuant to the Mojave River Groundwater Basin adjudication is 32 ac-ft/yr. for this well. The mine plan indicates that water hauling will be made using paved public roads via National Trails Highway to Lenwood Road to I-15 to Wild Wash Road. Water hauling is anticipated to take two truck loads per day according to the plan, however, 12,000 gal./da. would require six truck loads, resulting in six, two-way trips from the mine site. Under the new permit, water is being obtained by pipeline from Apple Valley Ranchos Water company, approximately 5 miles to the south. The transmission pipeline lies within established road right of way.

Reclamation will consist of leaving the quarry floor at a 1% gradient sloping downward from east to west, corresponding to the natural gradient of the site. Quarry side wall and back wall slopes shall be left at a 3:1 slope ratio. Waste material will be spread over the quarry floor and the original surface material that is scrapped and grubbed from the surface will be placed back over the spread waste material contingent upon the "project biologist's" recommendations. Quarry slopes may be "cat-walked" depending upon stability of the surface material. The reclamation plan indicates that a seed mix consisting of palo verde (application rate of 5 lbs./ac.), creosote bush (application rate of 10 lbs./ac.) and Encelia farinosa (desert brittle bush) (application

rate of 15 lbs./ac.) would be broadcast seeded. The process includes the establishment of a “test plot” prior to final reclamation.

ENVIRONMENTAL/EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS: The project site is located in the western region the Mojave Desert in an unincorporated portion of San Bernardino County (see attached location map). The site lies at the base of the western extension of the Stoddard Mountains in the southeastern margin of Brisbane Valley within the Wild Wash drainage. The Turtle Mountain Range is located about three miles south of the site. Public domain lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) border the property to the north and east. Other private land, consisting of several small parcels, is contiguous on the south. The mine plan indicates that sand and gravel was mined on the same parcel in the late 1970's for a similar type of project.

The general elevations at the quarry extend from 3000 ft. to 3200 ft. MSL. The highest point in the immediate vicinity is a peak named Ritz on the USGS Topographic Map, with an elevation of 4459 ft., located about one mile east of the project. Annual temperatures range from below freezing in winter up to around 110° Fahrenheit during the summer. Precipitation averages four to six inches per year with the area experiencing periodic heavy thundershowers in the late summer months. The general landform of the site is a bajada, a gently sloping board alluvial fan that has formed from the erosion of the mountains on the east edge of the fan. The fan has a gentle gradient at about 8-10% slope downward toward the west.

The vegetation on the site consists of Cresote Bush Scrub (Holland, 1976). Vegetation consists of typical Mojave Creosote Bush Scrub elements which include creosote bush, burro bush, cheesebush, bladder sage, and Nevada joint-fir. Wildlife observed on-site was that typically associated with the described vegetative community and included the side-blotched lizard, coachwhip, common raven, horned lark, black-throated sparrow and the desert woodrat. This region of the desert is classified as Category 2 desert tortoise habitat, with animal densities in the 20-50 individuals per square mile. Evidence of desert tortoise, a state and federally listed threatened species, was found within the area to be mined. No other sensitive plant or wildlife species were observed on the project site. As a condition of approval in 1997, the named area was relocated to avoid the Desert Tortoise habitat.

	EXISTING LAND USE	OFFICIAL LAND USE DISTRICT	IMPROVEMENT LEVEL
NORTH	BLM Open Space	Resource Conservation (RC)	5
SOUTH	Vacant and Telephone Relay Tower	Resource Conservation (RC)	5
EAST	BLM Open Space	Resource Conservation (RC)	5
WEST	Interstate 15 Freeway and Vacant	Resource Conservation (RC)	5

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving no impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology /Soils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/ Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance | |

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- ☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

RICHARD L. TOUSLEE

DATE

Signature

DATE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS — Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION:

The project site is located adjacent to the Interstate 15 Freeway. The site is an occupied mine site, originally permitted in 1997. This portion of the I-15 is a state Scenic Highway and has a Scenic Route designation in the County General Plan Open Space Element. Looking east from the highway are unobstructed views which provide scenic vistas of rugged desert mountains and open bajadas. Views to the west provide vast vistas of the Brisbane Valley.

The project site is bordered on the north and east by Public Domain lands administered by the BLM. The BLM has designated the area as the Stoddard Valley Off Highway Vehicle Area.

The applicant has included an updated assessment of the visual impacts of the project in the mining and reclamation plan and includes various photographs portraying the views. Primary viewing locations are from the I-15 Freeway. The project is first visible from the south about 1 1/2 - 2 miles from the project, approaching Wild Wash Road. Traveling down the grade into the Wild Wash drainage, the upper parts of the onsite equipment and stockpiles become visible. The site is first visible from the north less than one mile from the site. The site presents a close view as one travels along the freeway immediately west of the site.

SUBSTANTIATION (check X if project is located within the viewshed of any Scenic Route listed in the General Plan):

- a) The project will cause a partial obstruction to scenic vistas to the east. This occurs due to the rock plant, stockpiles and asphalt batch plant facilities located up gradient from the freeway. Although no profile simulations were provided in the visual analysis to aid in determining the amount of interference, it appears that if the plant were closer to the Wild Wash Road Interchange, the project would be less impacting. This is due to the proximity of the road overpass and the temporary visual interruption that the interchange creates as well as a blending or concentration of both road improvements and the plant facilities that would occur.
- b) The project site is fully visible from I-15. Reclamation of the site to natural open space will be required to ultimately insure that the potential for long-term impacts will be reduced to below a level of significance. Since effective reclamation under the proposed plan is not proposed to occur for two decades into the future, the quarry will be open and exposed to viewing from the Scenic Highway for essentially the proposed 20 year operational life. Mitigation will lessen the overall effects of the project. The primary mitigating element is one of reducing the life of the mining approval to correspond to the actual

demonstrated need for the specific construction activity. Additionally, limiting the size of the disturbed area and keeping the processing plant to a reasonable footprint, plus limiting the height of the stockpiles will reduce the visual impact of the project. The project may still be visually objectionable, but the scale will be substantially reduced. Final quarry surfaces can be reshaped to create some undulating ground surfaces that more nearly resemble natural topography.

- c) The mining application indicates that operations at the site will only occur between 6 am and 6 pm. Nighttime operations would have the potential to cause significant new light or glare. However, the project as proposed would not constitute any significant effect. For the periods when operations would take place for short times before or after dark, the standard mining conditions require that any artificial lighting used to illuminate the site be hooded and directed away from adjoining properties and would be modified to include direction away from the freeway.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The potential impacts related to aesthetics are less than significant with the incorporation of the mitigation listed below.

1. Limit stock pile heights to a maximum of 35' from natural grade .
2. Removal of plant equipment during idle periods.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES — In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION:

The site contains a shallow soil mantle that supports low densities of native vegetation. Surface materials are typical of a "desert pavement".

SUBSTANTIATION (check __ if project is located in the Important Farmlands Overlay):

No agriculture nor soils suitable for cultivation of crops exist on-site.

MITIGATION:

No mitigation is required.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The potential impacts related to agriculture are less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. AIR QUALITY — Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION:

At peak operations, the project proposes mining an average of 250,000 cu yds per year. The applicant prepared air quality impact assessment is included in the mining and reclamation plan. The material produced at this site will serve the Victorville and Barstow areas. Average haul distances will be less than 15 miles in either direction. The project lies within the Southeast Desert Air Basin (SEDAB) and is within the jurisdiction of the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District. The SEDAB is currently in non-attainment for PM₁₀, and as such, the mining operation poses a potential for significant impacts to air quality by contributing to cumulative air basin deterioration.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District's CEQA Air Quality Handbook (April 1993) was used as a guideline in preparing the emissions inventory. The total unmitigated emissions to be generated by the project are summarized in the table below.

ESTIMATED PROJECT EMISSIONS
(Pounds/Day)

Source	CO	ROG	NOx	SOx	PM ₁₀
Mining	---	---	---	---	259.5
Aggregate Plant	---	---	---	---	44.8
Asphalt Plant	46.5	13.5	163.8	2.0	26.4
Vehicle Trips	252.4	81.3	305.5	0.9	0.3
Total Emissions	298.9	94.8	469.3	2.9	331.0
AQMD THRESHOLD	550.0	75.0	100.0	150.0	150.0

SUBSTANTIATION (discuss conformity with the South Coast Air Quality Management Plan, if applicable):

- a. The mining and reclamation operation can be expected to cumulatively add to the fugitive dust problem in the air basin which is in non-compliance with Federal Air Quality Standards. The Air District is in compliance with other criteria pollutants. The emissions calculations included in the mine plan and summarized above reveal that the project exceeds significance thresholds for ROG, Nox and PM10. These emissions, however, appear to have been miscalculated in that the analysis is reported to be based on 2,000,000 tons/yr of production rather than the 412,000 tons/yr. identified in the mine application as being the peak annual production rate. These emissions are also the unmitigated yield and no mitigation was proposed in the mine plan. If the emission totals were reduced proportionally to correspond to the applied for production rate, it would appear that the emissions may be at a level that would be less than significant. With the addition of mitigation, project level impacts can be reduced to less than significant.

The measures are identified below and generally include the preparation and submission of a Dust Control Plan to the Mojave Desert AQMD for review and approval, reducing emissions through the use of water spraying, dust palliatives, and placing crushed rock on the main access road, as well as obtaining permits to construct and operate the diesel generator and processing and screening plants.

- b. Although asphalt batch plants are generally known to produce some objectionable odors, there are no sensitive receptors near the project.
- c. The relatively small scale of this type of project is not of a climate modifying character and no significant effects are anticipated.

MITIGATION:

- AQ-1 Prior to any disturbance, the applicant shall prepare a Dust Control Plan and submit it to the Mojave Desert AQMD for review and approval. The plan shall identify and implement the following measures as recommended in the Air Pollutant Emissions Inventory prepared for the project:
 - a. Water spray and/or the use of chemical palliatives or other surface binding agents on all unpaved access roads, the process area, active mining level(s) and dust prone stockpiles as necessary to reduce PM₁₀ emissions so as not to exceed the Mojave Desert AQMD's threshold of emissions.
 - b. Grade and top the main access road with an appropriate depth of coarse granite and fine aggregate to alleviate road degradation and reduce dust.
 - c. Installation of a spray bar system and/or other dust suppression systems on all screening and processing facilities.

- d. Limit speed of haul trucks on on-site roads to 15 miles per hour. Limit maximum truck speed on the BLM access road to 35 miles per hour.
- e. Blasting shall not occur during periods of high wind (sustained winds greater than 20 miles per hour).
- f. Clear areas to be mined only as needed to reduce exposed surface areas.
- g. Tune and maintain all equipment and use Mojave Desert AQMD required low sulfur fuel. Also, maintain six (6) inches of freeboard on all haul trucks.

AQ-2 Prior to use or occupancy of the site, applicant shall obtain all necessary permits from the Mojave Desert AQMD, including Permits to Construct and Operate, or provide evidence that said permits are not required.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures will reduce the project's potential impacts to Air Quality to a level less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES — Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree				
	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with	Less than Significant	No Impact

	Impact	Mitigation Incorp.	Impact	
preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION:

The undisturbed portions of the quarry site support typical Mojave Creosote Bush Scrub habitat. The existing quarry is adjacent to a previously disturbed site that was used for borrow material in the late 1970's. An improved access road also extends from the Widlwash Rd interchange to the present quarry. The project is located in classified Category 2 desert tortoise habitat. The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) is state and federally listed as threatened under the respective Endangered Species Acts. The initial biological resource assessment of the site was completed in April, 1997 by Thomas Olsen and Associates (TDA). That field survey work was performed in April 1997. A follow-up independent verification of the biological assessment, with focus on desert tortoise occurrence, was conducted by Circle Mountain Biological Consultants (CMBC) with a site visit in June 1997. The TDA assessment found a total of 19 plant species and 16 vertebrate species on the project site. The vertebrate taxa included six reptiles, seven birds and three mammals. The survey report indicated that no threatened, endangered or otherwise rare plants were observed on the site and none are expected to occur. A new survey was completed in March 2002 for this permit application, including zone of influence surveys. Results of this most recent survey were that no tortoise or tortoise sign was observed. The 1997 installation of exclusionary fencing was viewed as successful. In 2002, adult scat was observed approximately 600' east/northeast of the pit, outside of the fencing. No other sensitive or protected species were observed during the survey. The entire 37 acres have been disturbed and the only measurable remnants of plant cover is the transplant nursery, adjacent to the plant site. The project buildout of 35 acres as a result of the 1997 permit was mitigated by the relocation of the pit disturbance area to avoid the occupied habitat identified in the 1997 surveys. Ongoing mitigation for maintaining the desert tortoise fencing has effectively prevented any take from occurring.

SUBSTANTIATION (check if project is located in the Biological Resources Overlay X or contains habitat for any species listed in the California Natural Diversity Database):

- a. The project has resulted in the loss of approximately 37 acres of Category 2 desert tortoise habitat. While the loss of the 37 acres is considered significant, the quality of the habitat is low to moderate due to locational context of the site. The site is cutoff from better habitat to the west by the I-15 Freeway and the habitat is reduced on the east due to the steep topography of the mountain range. To the south, the project area is contiguous with previously disturbed area of the old borrow site, the freeway off-ramp and the extension of Wild Wash Road. To the north, the site is bordered by public domain that is within the BLM Stoddard Valley Off Highway Vehicle Area which is an open area for off-road vehicle (ORV) usage. The site has been impacted by ORV use due to a dirt road which extends from the old borrow site northerly onto BLM land. The desert tortoise habitat loss is addressed under item "b" below.
- b,d. The project as originally built out did not result in the "taking" of occupied habitat or desert tortoise due to effective project redesign to avoid the habitat. Currently the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the County of San Bernardino and other city and county jurisdictions are jointly developing the Western Mojave Coordinated Resource Management Plan. This plan will designate areas within the West Mojave Desert that are to be set aside as habitat for threatened or endangered plant and wildlife species and develop a mitigation/compensation approach for incidental take in non-critical habitat areas.
- c. The proposed reclamation plan and County standard requirements for projects in natural settings call for

the use of native plants in the revegetation effort. This approach minimizes the potential for exotic/weedy species establishing on the site to an extent that would cause significant impairment to the natural ecosystem of the area. The applicant has an approved Revegetation and Habitat Restoration Program to supplement the Reclamation Plan.

MITIGATION:

- BR-1 The applicant shall maintain a current Section 1603 Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) to address the affected washes within the project area.
- BR-2 Desert Tortoise exclusionary fencing shall remain installed and in good repair throughout the active mining and reclamation life of the project.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce the project's impacts to biological resources to less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES — Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION:

The project site is located on the upper portion of a bajada at the westerly end of the Stoddard Mountains. Numerous dry washes and gullies dissect the alluvial fan from east to northwest. An archaeological assessment of the site was conducted by Archaeological Associates and the report was dated May 12, 1997. The report is on file with the Planning Department. The assessment included: 1) a records search for site record information with the Archaeological Information Center at the San Bernardino County Museum and 2) a field reconnaissance of the project site. No cultural resources were identified on the site and none are suspected of occurring. No impacts are anticipated to result from the proposed project based on the assessment.

SUBSTANTIATION (check if the project is located in the Cultural _ or Paleontologic _ Resources overlays or cite results of cultural resource review):

- a b, d. The project will not alter or destroy a prehistoric or historic archaeological site due to its location outside of typical or known cultural resources locations.

- c. The project is not in an area known to contain fossilized remains. No impact to paleontologic resources is expected.

MITIGATION:

No mitigation is required.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The potential impacts related to cultural and paleontologic resources are less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS — Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18 1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use				
of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems				
	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact

where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

☐☐☐☒

DISCUSSION:

The geologic map, San Bernardino Quadrangle, shows the site as lying with older alluvium deposits. The regional geology of this area is controlled by the Helendale and Lenwood Faults. However, no faults are known to exist within or in the immediate area of the project. The Helendale Fault is located about 10 west of the site and the Lenwood Fault occurs about 17 miles north. The site is not located within any Geologic Hazard Overlay District. The mining method will result in moderately shallow excavations, approximately 80 ft. below natural grade, at the end of mining. The downslope end of the quarry on the west will "daylight" and the upslope portion on the east will be left with a 3:1 back wall slope ratio.

The project will consist of excavating, processing and hauling construction aggregate which will generate fugitive dust within the area. Although not included as a provision in the reclamation plan submitted by the applicant, other mitigation contained in this document will also include salvaging and stockpiling the soil mantle for future reclamation which could also increase the potential for soil erosion. Due to the nature of the deposit, little, if any, overburden or waste rock will be generated. The project will result in the disturbance of approximately 37 acres over the life of the mining operation. Reclamation is proposed to occur in conjunction with the mining operation, however large areas of the site may remain disturbed for long periods of time.

SUBSTANTIATION (check ☐ if project is located in the Geologic Hazards Overlay District):

- a) No unique or hazardous geologic substructures are known to exist within the project site and no adverse effects are anticipated. Exposure of people or property to geologic hazards is minimal due to the following considerations: 1) few personnel required to perform the mining activity and asphalt batch plant operations, 2) the site is private property closed to the public, and 3) there are virtually no permanent structures needed at operation and there is considerable buffering between the mine site and off-site structures and other private property. The I-15 Freeway is located approximately 1200 ft to the west of the quarry boundary.

There is no potential for water-related seismic hazards due to the hardrock geologic environment and the lack of any nearby large water body.

During the operational life of the mining activity, which is proposed for 20 years, there is the potential for substantial wind and water erosion to occur prior to final reclamation actions. The Mining/Reclamation Plan includes adequate measures to control water erosion and other measures have been added as mitigation under the flood hazards discussion above. Mitigation measures required under the Biological Resources and Air Quality sections will ensure that significant impacts related to wind erosion (i.e. fugitive dust) do not occur.

- b) The proposed mining operation will alter the existing topography by creating a "U" shaped quarry configuration from an aerial or "plan view". on the gently sloping bajada. Final quarry floors will be graded to maintain a minimum 1% gradient sloping downward to the west leaving a relatively flat area of about 30 ac. Side walls and the back wall will be left at a 3:1 slope ratio which is normally considered as inherently stable. The topographic change will be distinguishable and present a man-made appearance.
- c) There are no unique or unusual physical or geologic features on the site.
- d) The project will result in the disruption of existing soil on-site. The reclamation plan as proposed by the applicant did not include salvaging the surface material for later use as much "growth medium". However, mitigation was added under biological resources that require that as much growth media as possible be salvaged and stockpiled during initial mine development. Due to the shallow depth of the soil mantle, it is

not anticipated that there will be a large volume of this material. The growth medium will be stockpiled and maintained for future use in re-soiling and revegetation during post mining reclamation activities.

MITIGATION:

Mitigation measures contained in the Biological Section is applicable to Geology and Soils.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Implementation of the above identified mitigation measures as well as those erosion control measures identified in the Mining/Reclamation Plan will reduce the potential impacts to less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS —				
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people				
residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐
- h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

DISCUSSION:

The project site is located in a very rural area and is surrounded by vacant open space. There are no sensitive receptors near the site. There will be no permanent residences on the site. It is proposed that operations may occur up to 24 hours per day. Operations will include the use of a drilling rig, mine haul trucks, a front end loader, crushing and screening plants and associate truck and automobile traffic.

The project will require the use of petroleum based products such as propane, diesel fuel, oil and lubricants. These materials, if stored on-site, would be kept in relatively small quantities (typically 5,000 gallons of diesel fuel and 50 gallon drums for the oil and lubricants). The propane storage tank will be a trailored, portable unit adequate for the estimated 140,000 gallons a of usage. No blasting is proposed in this mining operation. No other chemicals or hazardous substances are proposed for use in the operation.

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a,g,h. Standard conditions of approval for mining and other projects with comparable grading activity provide adequate regulation of oil, gasoline, and diesel fuel storage and handling. At a minimum, these conditions require a Business Plan, Hazardous Materials Handler Permit and Hazardous Waste Generators Permit from the Department of Environmental Health Service. In addition, the applicant will be required to obtain the necessary licensing from the State and permits from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department and the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms for any use and/or storage of explosives.
- b. There are no applicable emergency response or evacuation plans for this area.
- c. The operation is not expected to result in the creation of any potential health hazard. The operator will be required to comply with the rules and regulations of both CAL-OSHA and MSHA during all mining and reclamation activities.

MITIGATION:

No mitigation is required.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The potential impacts related to hazardous/radioactive materials are less than significant.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
--------------------------------------	---	------------------------------------	--------------

VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY — Would the project:

- a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge

requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION: The project is located in an arid area that typically receives less than four inches of rain per year. The area does experience periodic heavy showers and flash flooding during the summer months due to thunderstorms. Two desert washes are indicated as intermittent blue line streams on the USGS Topographic Map and border the quarry area on the north and south. The northerly wash is a more substantial wash and the southerly one is a small localized drainage. The southerly wash will be crossed to access the quarry from Wild Wash Road. The quarry limits lie just south of the northerly wash and no project roads are proposed in this wash. The wash is proposed to be crossed by placing a drainage culvert in the stream course and filling and compacting earthen material as the road surface. The mine plan contains a map delineating the surface hydrology. Calculations indicate that the southerly wash to be crossed has a surface drainage area of 124 ac. and will conservatively carry 180 cubic feet per second (cfs) resulting in the need for a 54" culvert or two 36"

culverts to be installed to carry storm flows.

The project will create a low angle side hill quarry approximately 80 feet deep where the quarry floor intersects the back wall slope. According to the USGS Geohydrologic Map¹, the water table in this area is located at approximately 2,300 feet. The lowest elevation mining will reach is the 3,000 foot level which is over 700 feet above the water table. The construction of an on-site well for water production is not proposed. The only major use of water will be for dust suppression activities on the site haul roads and processing operations. An estimated 4,000 - 12,000 gallons of water per day or about 7.5 acre feet per year will be needed for dust suppression. Water will be obtained from a pipeline from Apple Valley Ranchos Water Company. Bottled water will be provided for employees during operations. Portable toilets will be provided for sanitation.

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a, c, & e) The project will not result in a significant modification to any current water movement subject to proper installation and maintenance of the culvert drainage structure and the incorporation of additional mitigation. The northerly quarry boundary appears to be very close to the wash on the north side of the project. To ensure that the quarry or other related activities such as fence building, vegetation clearance, etc. do not encroach within the banks of the wash, the quarry limits are set back an adequate distance to provide a sufficient buffer. Mitigation has been added to provide such a buffer. Runoff from thunderstorms typically sheet flows over the existing surface of the proposed quarry, some of which appears to concentrate into two small ephemeral channels that converge with the larger "blue line" washes that border the quarry. Interruption of the on-site channels by mining could contribute to unnecessary, uncontrolled erosion and gulying without proper control devices. The Mining/Reclamation Plan does not propose any treatment of these. However, with the addition of mitigation requiring erosion control consisting of rip-rap energy dissipaters and rock armoring of drainage swales on the back or side walls as necessary will reduce any potential adverse impacts. Mitigation has been added to require removal and proper restoration to ensure that the culvert(s) does not eventually plug up with debris and cause washout and erosion in the channel. A National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) will be required from the Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region.
- b) No major stream courses or other important water bodies exist within or near the project boundaries. The Mojave River is located about 8 miles west of the project. The project will not result in the diversion or re-direction of groundwaters as the groundwater table is approximately 700 feet below the lowest mining level.
- d) No water bodies occur within or near the site.
- f) The project will not result in exposure of people or property to water-related hazards due to the lack of substantial drainages carrying flood flows or water impoundments with associate dams. Extensive physical separation exists between the project and off-site improvements or locations where people congregate. The project does not have the potential to pollute or contaminate groundwater. The operation will not involve the use of any toxic chemicals. The storage and use of petroleum based products will be under permit from DEHS and the necessary precautions to help prevent or cleanup spills will be required.

The project will not result in the discharge of any hazardous substance into surface waters or alter the quality of any surface waters.

- g) The project will not intercept a groundwater aquifer or result in any changes to the quantity of groundwaters.
- h) The project could use up to six acre feet of water per year during peak operations. This amount of water

is not considered significant and will not substantially impact available groundwater supplies used for public water systems.

MITIGATION:

- FH-1 Rip-rap energy dissipaters and rock armoring will be installed and maintained to control flows of the two small ephemeral channels that are present within the quarry boundaries or other suitable substitute as determined by a Registered Engineer or Certified Erosion Control Specialist and approved by the Planning or Department. These devices shall be in place at the end of each phase of mining and incorporated in the final reclamation.
- FH-2 The quarry limits on the northern portion of the site shall be set back a minimum of 200 ft. from the top of the southerly bank of the wash. The quarry boundaries shall be marked in such a way as to be visible to quarry personnel and for verification during inspection. Where encroachment into the 200' setback has occurred, armory of the toe of the adjacent berming shall be done.
- FH-3 The culvert for the road crossing of the "blue-line" stream that borders the quarry on the south shall be removed and the channel shall be restored to a near natural condition as part of the final reclamation procedures.
- FH-4 The applicant shall obtain a NPDES Permit from the Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region and a copy shall be submitted to the Planning Department. In the event that a permit is not required, a letter from the LRWQCB so stating shall be submitted in lieu of the permit.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The potential impacts related to Flood Hazards and water supply/water quality can be mitigated to less than significant with the implementation of the measures identified above.

IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING — Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION:

The applicant proposes to establish a long term aggregate mining operations on approximately 37 acres area within a 398 acre parcel of privately held land owned by the Catellus Corporation. The applicant intends on utilizing the quarry site beyond the initial 5 year permit for aggregate for I-15 highway improvements during the next 20 years. The property and the area surrounding it is currently vacant open space. The nearest neighboring residence is located more than eight to nine miles west of the site near National Trails Highway. Another long term sand and gravel mine (Black Angel Mine) was approved about eight years ago that is located about 5-6 miles north of the proposed Wild Wash Sand and Gravel Mine. The Black Angel Mine was established to provide long term regional aggregate needs in the same general vicinity. In addition to the nearby Black Angel, other aggregate mines exist in Oro Grande to the south and in Barstow to the north.

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a-c. The County General Plan has established that while most land uses have options to site development, mineral extraction is limited to sites where the minerals naturally occur. As such, the extraction of mineral resources is allowed in any land use district subject to the approval of a Mining Conditional Use Permit and/or Reclamation Plan. The project site is in a Resource Conservation Land Use District with an Improvement Level of 5. Sand and gravel resources, particularly in the Mojave Desert region of the County, are commonly occurring and do not require the same special locational requirements that most other mineral products do. Most of the low lying areas in the desert are classified as to rock type on the Geology Map of California as either younger or older alluvium. While individual sites vary with the economic character of the alluvial material, suitable sand and gravel sources are common with the development constraints dictated more by other factors such as surrounding land uses and access and biological resources at the site. The subject site poses a convenient location for the highway construction work. Mitigation measures have been proposed to lessen biological impacts which will also aid in reducing visual-aesthetic impacts. These measures will contain the overall size of the pit both in depth and surface area. Based on the incorporation of these measures in conditions of approval, the land use impacts of the Wild Wash Sand and Gravel Mine could be reduced to less than significant.

Because land use impacts address capatability issues and involve policy determinations, they are ultimately subject to the discretion of the County's policy making body which is the Board of Supervisors or subject to interpretation by the County Planning Commission.

MITIGATION:

- LU-1. The applicant shall provide and maintain an acceptable form of financial assurance in an amount that ensures reclamation of the site is completed per the approved Mining/Reclamation Plan and conditions of approval.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The imposition of the mitigation identified for the other resource issues will contribute to formulating a project that will have improved land use capability. The mitigation identified above as LU-1 will insure that suitable reclamation will occur on the mining project. With incorporation of the prescribed mitigation, the potential impacts related to land use can be reduced to less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
X. MINERAL RESOURCES — Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION:

The project is not located in an MRZ area. The project is designed to utilize the mineral resources on-site.

SUBSTANTIATION (check ____ if project is located within the Mineral Resource Zone Overlay):

- a. The project will develop the mineral resources on-site.

MITIGATION:

No mitigation is required.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The potential impacts related to mineral resources are less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. NOISE — Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION (check if the project is located in the Noise Hazard Overlay District ____ or is subject to severe noise levels according to the General Plan Noise Element ____):

a-d. There is the potential for operations to result in increased noise levels, both from the plant and operation of mobile equipment. However, no sensitive noise receptors are located within the area. There will be no residences or other sensitive receptors located on the site. On-site personnel will be required to comply with CAL-OSHA requirements for noise protection.

MITIGATION:

No mitigation is required.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The potential impacts related to Noise are less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING — Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

DISCUSSION:

The project would provide construction aggregate and asphalt to service the local road construction activity on I-15. Approximately 6-8 people will be employed by the operation.

SUBSTANTIATION:

a. The project will not affect existing housing or create a demand for new housing. The short term interim operational periods will not induce extra ordinary demands for employees or housing.

c. The project will not affect the distribution or density of the local population.

MITIGATION:

No mitigation is required.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The potential impacts related to housing/demographics/socioeconomics are less than significant.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
--------------------------------------	---	------------------------------------	--------------

XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES —

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION:

Local area services are expected to be adequate and appropriate for the proposed mining and reclamation activities on the site. This type of land use typically does not require extensive public services support.

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a. The project will not result in a need for increased services.

MITIGATION:

No mitigation is required.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The potential impacts related to public services are less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV. RECREATION —				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION:

The project will not impact the recreational opportunities in the area. The project will result in the quarry area being fenced and signs posted to warn off road recreationalists of the mining operation. There appears to be illegal OHV travel across the private property from Wild Wash Road traveling north.

MITIGATION:

No mitigation is required.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The potential impacts related to recreation are less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC — Would the project:				
a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION:

The project will provide aggregate and asphalt products for road construction in the immediate vicinity of the quarry, extending from the north part of Victorville to the Lenwood Road in Barstow. During operational times, limited traffic impacts are anticipated because the truck hauls will be short distance and done in conjunction with the highway construction work that will cause its own traffic delays. The initial 5 year permit produced an estimated total of about 760,000 tons of rock product. This proposed new permit will produce an estimated 1.4 million tons. Estimated truck trips per day is 357 (45/hour).

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a,b,e. The project would only generate gravel truck trips that would be associated with the highway construction projects in the immediate area. Since the aggregate and asphalt truck trips would occur in spite of the sand and gravel mine due to the construction activity, the associated project traffic is not considered to be significant.
- f. All parking will be on-site and the project will not require additional off-site parking nor will it cause any increase in the demand for existing parking facilities.

MITIGATION:

No mitigation is required.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The potential impacts related to transportation systems and circulation patterns are less than significant.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
--------------------------------------	---	------------------------------------	--------------

XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS —

Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

DISCUSSION:

There are no utility corridors on or adjacent to the project site. The project will not result in an increase in the demand for additional services.

SUBSTANTIATION:

- d. The project will not interfere with water distribution systems or cause a significant increase in the demand for such systems. Current water supply needed for dust control and processing is being provided by a licensed water purveyor.

MITIGATION:

No mitigation is required.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The potential impacts related to utilities and infrastructure are less than significant.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorp.	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
--------------------------------------	---	------------------------------------	--------------

XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE—

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause Substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly Or indirectly? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

DISCUSSION:

The potential impacts of the proposed mining operation have all been mitigated below a level of significance.

SUBSTANTIATION:

- Implementation of the project previously approved did result in the taking of desert tortoise habitat, although the habitat loss following the redesign of the project due to the prescribed mitigation listed in the 1997 document was to be low quality and adjacent to previous disturbed areas. The biological mitigation measures will avoid direct take of individual tortoises, a state and federally threatened species. The project is not within a DWMA as identified in the Draft Recovery Plan for the desert tortoise. The long term habitat viability of this site is questionable due to its proximal location to the freeway on the west, the BLM OHV area to north, the steep, non-suitable habitat to the east and encroaching disturbance on portions of the southerly land area. Project design avoids occupied habitat in northerly and easterly portions of the quarry area and will avoid CESA conflicts.
- The project as built establishes a long term sand and gravel quarry at this location adjacent to and in full view of a Scenic Highway and makes this project an example of one that diminishes long-term goals by implementing short-term projects that have superior alternatives to meeting the objective of providing aggregate resources. However, project redesign scaling down the size and duration will reduce the impacts to less than significant.
- The combination of the impacts identified in this assessment, collectively, may result in a significant

cumulative impacts to biological and scenic resources without mitigation. However, incorporation of the measures identified in this Initial Study will lessen the cumulative impacts to below a level of significance.

- d. The project may have adverse effects, either directly or indirectly, on human beings due to the impacts to scenic resources. However, with the redesign that is required through mitigation that can be imposed as conditions of approval, these impacts can be reduced to less than significant.

MITIGATION:

Appropriate mitigation measures have been identified in the biological, aesthetic-scenic resource and land use analyses.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The potential impacts of the proposed project can be reduced to less than significant.

III. Discussion of Environmental Evaluation:

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) requires that all mining operations have a reclamation plan approved by the local lead agency. The applicant has submitted this Mining Conditional Use Permit and Reclamation Plan to comply with both County and SMARA requirements. The mining/reclamation plan details the methods and procedures by which the site will be mined and then reclaimed to a usable condition which is readily adaptable for alternate land uses and which will protect the public's health and safety.

Review of this project has determined that the project can be redesigned to reduce the size and duration of the sand and gravel pit thereby avoiding significant impacts to the desert tortoise. The applicant may will be required to comply with either Section 7 or Section 10 of the FESA, that determination rests with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. However, given the applicant's stated short time frames for project implementation, the ability to satisfy the requirements of the federal regulations may be infeasible.

IV. Proposed Mitigation Measures to be included in project Conditions of Approval/ Mitigation Monitoring Program:

1. Limit stock pile heights to a maximum of 35' from natural grade .
 2. Removal of plant equipment during idle periods.
-
- FH-1 Rip-rap energy dissipaters and rock armoring will be installed and maintained to control flows of the two small ephemeral channels that are present within the quarry boundaries or other suitable substitute as determined by a Registered Engineer or Certified Erosion Control Specialist and approved by the Planning or Department. These devices shall be in place at the end of each phase of mining and incorporated in the final reclamation.
 - FH-2 The quarry limits on the northern portion of the site shall be set back a minimum of 200 ft. from the top of the southerly bank of the wash. The quarry boundaries shall be marked in such a way as to be visible to quarry personnel and for verification during inspection.
 - FH-3 The culvert for the road crossing of the "blue-line" stream that borders the quarry on the south shall be removed and the channel shall be restored to a near natural condition as part of the final reclamation procedures.
 - FH-4 The applicant shall obtain a NPDES Permit from the Water Quality Control Board, Lahontan Region and a copy shall be submitted to the Planning Department. In the event that a permit is not required, a letter

from the LRWQCB so stating shall be submitted in lieu of the permit.

- BR-1 The quarry pit boundaries shall be moved westerly a sufficient distance (approximately 300 - 400 feet) to avoid occupied tortoise habitat located during the Circle Mountain Biological Consultant survey.
- BR-2 Prior to any land disturbance occurring, the applicant shall obtain a determination from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as to whether a 10a Permit or a Section 7 consultation is required for this project. If either process is required, the applicant shall demonstrate full compliance prior to any site disturbance.
- BR-3 Under the personal direction of a qualified biologist with USFWS certification for tortoise handling, a tortoise enclosure fence shall be installed and maintained along the northerly and easterly boundaries of the quarry pit and at additional locations as deemed necessary by the biologist or the USFWS. Following fence installation, the entire quarry area shall be surveyed to insure that no tortoises remain within the enclosure.
- BR-4 Prior to any land disturbance occurring, the applicant shall obtain a Section 1603 Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) to address the affected washes within the project area.
- BR-5 Prior to any land disturbance occurring, the applicant , through a County approved Biologist or Botanist, shall complete a detailed Revegetation/Habitat Restoration Plan for reclamation of the site and submit it to the Planning Department for review and approval. The revegetation plan shall be incorporated into the final approved Mining/Reclamation Plan. The revegetation plan shall develop the goals and detailed procedures of the revegetation program to document that these goals have been achieved. The analysis shall include a plan for the re-establishment of vegetation, concurrent with mining, in disturbed areas detailing :
- a. The plant material, including all seedling and planting mixtures, sources, amount required and method of application - a seed mix of at least six of dominant perennial plants as listed in the TDA report shall be used for revegetation along with at three annual species, early successional stage species shall be included in the mix.. Specifications in the analysis shall be provided on the use of any seedlings, including planting method, size and grazing protection measures, weed control and finally the type, grade and application rate of fertilizers, if any. Methods for eradication of tamarisk on the project site shall be incorporated.
 - b. The plan shall provide for sufficient lead time to collect and salvage plant propagules from on or near the site. All salvageable cacti shall be recovered and properly transplanted for future use in final revegetation of the site.
 - c. A seed collection program to salvage propagules and important seed resources.
 - d. The upper 6-12 inches of the ground surface shall be scraped off and pushed up in wind rows bordering the quarry perimeter for re-soiling following final slope/grade preparation.
 - e. A revegetation test plot shall be utilized. The test shall be established in the old borrow area to the south.
 - f. A detailed monitoring/maintenance plan to monitor the success of the revegetation program and repair methods for eroded sites or areas requiring re-seeding/replanting. The monitoring/maintenance plan shall also include a methodology to determine how the financial assurance will be released back to the applicant once successful revegetation has been completed.

If deemed successful by the Planning Department, in consultation with the implementing Biologist/Botanist, this program will be continued for the entire life of the project. If not successful, the operator shall diligently explore for an acceptable alternative means of reclaiming the site. All alternative

shall be reviewed and approved the Planning Department prior to their implementation and shall be monitored by the applicant and consulting Biologist/Botanist to ensure success. Monitoring shall be conducted until the revegetation goals have been met.

- AQ-1 Prior to any disturbance, the applicant shall prepare a Dust Control Plan and submit it to the Mojave Desert AQMD for review and approval. The plan shall identify and implement the following measures as recommended in the Air Pollutant Emissions Inventory prepared for the project:
- a. Water spray and/or the use of chemical palliatives or other surface binding agents on all unpaved access roads, the process area, active mining level(s) and dust prone stockpiles as necessary to reduce PM₁₀ emissions so as not to exceed the Mojave Desert AQMD's threshold of emissions.
 - b. Grade and top the main access road with an appropriate depth of coarse granite and fine aggregate to alleviate road degradation and reduce dust.
 - c. Installation of a spray bar system and/or other dust suppression systems on all screening and processing facilities.
 - d. Limit speed of all project haul trucks on unpaved access roads to 15 miles per hour.
 - e. Blasting shall not occur during periods of high wind (sustained winds greater than 20 miles per hour).
 - f. Clear areas to be mined only as needed to reduce exposed surface areas.
 - g. Tune and maintain all equipment and use Mojave Desert AQMD required low sulfur fuel. Also, maintain six (6) inches of freeboard on all haul trucks.
- AQ-2. Prior to use or occupancy of the site, applicant shall obtain all necessary permits from the Mojave Desert AQMD, including Permits to Construct and Operate, or provide evidence that said permits are not required.
- LU-1. The applicant shall provide San Bernardino County with an acceptable form of financial assurance in an amount that ensures reclamation of the site is completed per the approved Mining/Reclamation Plan and conditions of approval.

REFERENCES:

Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone Act Map Series (PRC 27500)

Bio Assessment, RCA Associates, Inc., 4/22/02

CEQA Guidelines, Appendix K

County Museum Archaeological Information Center

County Museum Paleontologic Information Center

County of San Bernardino Development Code (Printing B), 1991, revised 2002

County of San Bernardino General Plan, adopted 1989, revised 2001

County of San Bernardino Hazard Overlay Maps EH23

County of San Bernardino Identified Hazardous Materials Waste Sites List, November 1990

Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Map and Flood Boundary Map

Geohydrologic Map of Water Resources, USGS Open File Report 48-74, 1974

Mohave Desert AQMD, Rule 403.2: Fugitive Desert Control Planning Area, July 1996

Wild Wash S&G Mine Text, Killstrom & Associates, June 2002